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LETTER DATED 30 AUGUST 1993 FROM THE PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF AZERBAIJAN TO THE UNITED NATIONS ADDRESSED TO PRESIDENT OF THE SECURITY COUNCIL

I have the honour to transmit herewith the text of a statement issued by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Azerbaijani Republic.

I should be grateful if you would have this letter and above-mentioned statement circulated as a document of the Security Council.

(Signed) Hassan A. HASSANOV
Ambassador
Permanent Representative

Annex

[Original: Russian]

Statement issued on 18 August 1993 by the Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Azerbaijani Republic

On 14 August 1993, V. Papazian, Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Armenia, addressed a letter to the Secretary-General of the United Nations in which he stated that Azerbaijani armed forces had on 13 August 1993 bombarded a number of populated places in the border districts of north-eastern Armenia. These actions by the Azerbaijani side are characterized in the letter from the Minister for Foreign Affairs as a "futile and myopic policy of drawing Armenia into a large-scale war and through it exacerbating the on-going conflict in the region."

The Ministry for Foreign Affairs of the Azerbaijani Republic totally rejects these accusations as the usual falsifications from the Armenian side and considers it necessary to state the following:

With striking persistence, the Foreign Affairs Department of Armenia has from the beginning attempted to persuade the whole world that Armenia is not involved in the war on Azerbaijani territory.

During that time, however, more than 17 per cent of Azerbaijan's territory has been occupied, the Armenian army has treated the peaceful Azerbaijani population with unheard-of brutality, and as a result of its crimes thousands of citizens of the Republic have been killed and wounded. About 1 million people have become refugees in their own country and more than 500 cities and inhabited places have been occupied. An area of more than 8,600 square kilometres is under occupation. According to very approximate calculations, by 18 August 1993, as a result of the invasion of Azerbaijan by armed forces of the Republic of Armenia, the damage to personal property suffered by Azerbaijani citizens in the districts bordering Armenia and the upper part of Karabakh amounted to more than US$ 1 billion. In the Republic as a whole, the dwellings of one fifth of the population, and one third of the industrial and agrarian sectors, have been, to one degree or another, ruined.

These facts completely refute the Armenian claim that local Armenians are carrying out the war in Azerbaijan. The 20,000 Armenians who now inhabit the Nagorny Karabakh region of the Azerbaijani Republic, which constitutes only 5 per cent of the territory of Azerbaijan, could not by any effort occupy a number of important districts of the Republic much larger in territory than Nagorny Karabakh itself. Where would the enormous amounts of armaments now being used against the peaceful Azerbaijani population in the Nagorny Karabakh region of Azerbaijan come from if not Armenia? In Mr. Papazian's letter, the territory seized by the Armenian forces in the Lachin district of Azerbaijan is cynically referred to as a "humanitarian corridor". But through this "corridor" a broad stream of arms, heavily armoured vehicles, ammunition and personnel moves from Armenia to Nagorny Karabakh and the adjoining occupied districts of Azerbaijan. That is why the Armenian side in the Minsk Group negotiations is for the second year stubbornly resisting Azerbaijan's proposal to establish

international control of the Lachin sector of the Armenian-Azerbaijani frontier. If in fact humanitarian aid was arriving by this route, as Erevan claims, Armenia would have no reason to fear such control.

In his statement to the United Nations Secretary-General, Mr. Papazian accuses the Azerbaijani side of imposing a military decision to the conflict, which in the opinion of the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Armenia jeopardizes the efforts of the CSCE Minsk Group.

But the Minsk process is being blocked by the occupation by Armenian forces of the Lachin, Kelbajar and Agdam districts of Azerbaijan. Between 13 and 18 August 1993 the Armenian armed forces seized 12 villages in the Djebrail and 15 villages in the Fizuli districts of Azerbaijan. The inhabitants of these districts bordering on Iran have abandoned their homes and are moving towards the Iranian frontier. More than 60,000 refugees have now gathered in these districts along the Azerbaijani-Iranian frontier.

All these events took place during the regular meeting of the Minsk Group in Rome, which again failed to make any progress because of the obstructionist position of Armenia and the Armenian community of Nagorny Karabakh.

The Ministry for Foreign Affairs of the Azerbaijani Republic believes that the above-stated facts will enable the United Nations Secretary-General to assess properly the letter from the Minster for Foreign Affairs of Armenia. It ill-behoves someone occupying so high a governmental post to engage in such an unseemly task as the purveying of disinformation to such authoritative organizations as the United Nations and its Secretary-General.

Baku, 18 August 1993